

REMARKS

Reconsideration is respectfully requested, for the rejection of the claims as anticipated by L'ANSON et al. U.S. Published Application No. 2002/0029172.

L'ANSON et al. has a U.S. filing date, and hence a U.S. priority date, of April 19, 2001.

By contrast, the present application is entitled to a priority date of August 25, 2000, prior to L'ANSON et al.'s. The priority date of the present application is equal to the filing date of the corresponding Japanese Application No. 2000-256377, of which a certified copy was filed August 21, 2001.

To perfect applicant's entitlement to the earlier priority date, we attach hereto a verified translation of Japanese Application No. 2000-256377.

There being no other rejection of record, it is believed that this application has been placed in condition for allowance, and passage to issue is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 25-0120 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17.

Respectfully submitted,

YOUNG & THOMPSON

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert J. Patch', written over a horizontal line.

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**APPENDIX:**

The Appendix includes the following item:

- a verified English translation of Japanese Application No. 2000-256377